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THE CHURCH OF CHRIST,

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IN examining the economy of grace, it is essential to success to keep constantly before the mind a few elementary truths as, land marks and sign posts, in the wide field of investigation that is before us. The slightest mistakes at the outset, can but prove fatal in our conclusions. We have seen that, all systems and theories of "church polity," are of doubtful bearing, hence, the endless failures, in attempts to construct a perfect creed. All speculative views of church government, but tend to darken counsel; by words without meaning. We remind our readers that, the true organs of the spiritual body, consist of the purified, sanctified, called and saved in heaven and upon the earth. All are but members of one family, and are led by the same Good Spirit of our God. They are not only heirs of God, but are the joint heirs of our Lord Jesus Christ. The members of Christ, are "Living Stones, and constitute a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

We have also seen that the first obligation which rests upon the world, is a full submission of soul, spirit and body, to God, in yielding obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not enough, merely to have the heart changed. but the true convert, is quick-

ened; and adopted into the spiritual household. In order to live as becometh saints, after submitting to our kind Creator, it is quite as important for the saints to

"SUBMIT ONE TO ANOTHER."

The Spirit taught, they "should be subject the one to another." Without this union of the materials of the body, it might still be said we are but "children, tossed to and fro, and are carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning ceaftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive." We have noticed that. when the first converts were baptized on Pentecost, "About three thousand were placed together," or put into living and working condition the same day. The saved, were "Placed in one," or so organized and set in the body, as to enable them to, "continue steadfast, in the Apostle's teaching, in the fellowship, in prayer, and breaking of bread from house to house." The next matter requiring attention, is to ascertain

THE SCRIPTURAL TEACHING REGARDING THE INCREASE OF THE CHURCH.

Paul informs us that, "The whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplyeth, according to the effectual working in the manner of every part, maketh increase of the body in order to the edifying itself in love." Eph. 4, 16. The members are to be "fitly joined together, and compacted, or coupled---yoked, or tied together, in a manner to walk and work together, in a common cause. Every part of the body, in order to effectual working, is justly measured of God. With these directions, we can scarcely avoid the conclusion that,

THE DISCIPLES ARE LLL DIVINELY SET, OR PLACED IN THE BODY.

The members of the spiritual family, are ordained specially of God, to their work, for which each is best qualified. With this

view, we can appreciate the statement tha,t the Holy Spirit makes not only the Overseers, or Bishops of the churches; but particuly calls, sets and leads all classes into their legitimate work. God makes it the duty of the Seniors, or Elders for instance, to occupy the place of Shepherds of the flock—they are the Overseers, Bishops, and Rulers, in the household. The young men are also, divinely assigned the work to which they are called. The aged women, are commissioned from above, ordained and set as the proper teachers of the young women. They instruct in daily business, in family matters, and in reference to all the obligations of life. This brings us directly to the question, as to

WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH IS OFFICIAL?

In the true scriptural sense, every work in the church may be official, and every member under the Prince, may be a high official, with commission sent from heaven. Paul says, "We have many members in one body, but all the members have not the same office." Ro. 12, 4. The word here for office is practice, and the Apostle intended merely to say, that, we have many members in the body, but each performs best the work for which his measure qualifies him. The doctrine of official and non-official service, resembles somewhat the question,

"IS COMMUNION OPEN OR CLOSE"?

If the subject of "communion" has reference to christian duty, it is only necessary to determine the value of our obligations to God. If the work is christian, then all christians, we presume, are required to perform the service. If it is the work of, or for preachers only, or any particular class, then, it is to be confined to that class. Our reading leads us to the conclusion that, all the saints—all the obedient believers—all who have trustingly yeilded their hearts to God, submitted to his Son in baptism, and are leading blameless lives in the church, are exhorted to examine themselves, and so partake." Others, are "without"—that, is, they are out of the body, and therefore have no rights, common with the saints at the table of the Lord, or elsewhere.

We repeat that, if any christian service, is official, all must be

so. If any member performs his christian obligations from the authority of official grace, all christians likewise perform their service by special grace, conferred. We have noticed that, some imagine that, the comparatively few officials, from their representative character, denote the church, and many are disposed to assign all the labor of religion, and all the honor, to a small class. When however, we examine the word of God, we see that, the inspired letters were addressed to the churches, as collective assemblies fully authorized by the Divine Father to conduct the worship. If this is the scriptural view, it is the birthright of the members, as the spiritual sons and daughters of the Almighty, to perform all the service of the household of the faithful. In this examination, to remove all doubts, there are various minor questions, which require attention. It is said, for instance, that, "What is every bodies business, is no bodies business." This is merely saying that, all are not competent to preach, profitably, all are not equal in exhortation, or possessed of equal ability as rulers, but it does not argue that, if one cannot excel all his brethren, or in any particular department, he is therefore, at liberty, to spend his life in idleness—to abstain from all active service in the body. If physical labor is essential to a vigorous and healthful body, and mind, spiritual service is much more important, for growth in grace and the knowledge of the truth. Possibly, the greatest religious error of the age, is evinced by the prevailing ignorance in the church members, regarding the true scriptural divisions of spiritual labor. If we have departed from the primitive usages, it should be our ambition to restore back to the church, the ancient customs. We deem it, at least, our duty to scrutinize closely,

THE CURRENT THEORIES OF OFFICIAL SERVICE.

The religious orders differ somewhat, as to the plans of making church officers; but all agree as to the conclusion that, all religious work is to be performed by a few authorized persons who act for the whole household. A few examples, will answer for illustrating the subject.

Possibly, the ministers of Romish theology, and at least nine tenths of Protestaut leaders, assume that, with the Apostles of Christ they, "are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did

beseech the world by them, to be reconciled. The true Ambassadors of Christ, preached not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and themselves as servants for Jesus sake. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined into their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." They had "this treasure in earthern vessels, that, the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of men." 2 Cor. 4, 5-7. All the treasures of truth, and all things necessary for the salvation of the world, were manifested through the Apostles of the Savior. This treasure was in earthern vessels—in the hearts of these holy and inspired men—and they, as the Ambassadors of Christ, preached it to the world. Since their death, the treasure has not dwelt in earthern vessels, bvt in the Scriptures of truth ; and as there has been no new proclamation, and not the slightest addition to the old Gospel of reconciliation, no additional Ambassadors have been needed; and all who have come in the name of Ambassadors, as Apostles of Christ, have proved themselves impostors and enemies of the cross of Christ. He that held the seven stars in his right hand, and walked in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, said to the angel of the church of Ephesus, "Thou hast tried them who say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." If the early saints tried and condemned pretenders, it is certainly still the right of Christians to act in like manner. Christ needs no new Ambassadors, and none since the Apostles fulfilled their mission, in delivering their message of salvation to our race, have been honored with a divine mission. Hence, all modern Ambassadors, are without divine authority, and are really the ministers of Satan, transformed into the ministers of light.

PREACHERS STILL PROFESS TO BE CALLED AND SENT AS WERE THE APOSTLES OF CHRIST.

When Paul said to the disciples, "With the heart man believes unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," he asked the question, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" Ro. 10, 14, 15.

It will be remembered that, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God." By the Ambassadors of Christ, the

word of God was made known. Through them, the words were spoken to a lost world, and the whole plan of redemption was revealed and written by the finger of God in the New Testament. Before the revelation of the Gospel, was made known, and before the New Tessament was given, men were called to preach as the "Spirit moved them, or gave them utterance," but when the inspired teachers had revealed all that was necessary to life and godliness, and it was written for our instruction, we have needed no repetition of it; and if an angel were to preach another Gospel, Paul said, let him be accursed."

The Apostle quoted the prophecy, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach (make known) the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." Ro. 10, 16. Has any modern called and sent preacher been able to utter a syllable of Gospel, not written in the Scriptures? Has any one, "brought a word of glad tidings, to the world? All was brought by the inspired preachers, and modern Apostles have added nothing to the divine message. Such called and sent preachers as Paul described have not lived upon the earth, for nearly eighteen hundred years. John was the last. We have seen not a few in our travels who professed to speak as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and assumed the right to make known, good news to the lost. But it is quite sufficient to say that, "All truth—all religious light, was fully revealed in the first century, and all professions of divine missions, or commissions, of being called and sent of God, or officially endowed of the Father, to do any thing, in his kingdom, of so extraordinary a character, is without the slightest authority of truth. Ignorance and wickedness lie at the foundation of the whole corrupt system of official grace.

THE MOST POPULAR VIEW OF OFFICIAL AUTHORITY.

We feel safe in assuming that, in the Romish and Protestant churches, there are two classes of members, the officers and the people, who constitute the "hewers of wood and drawers of water—the workers who support the ministers of grace; or as the distinction is more commonly made, the church is composed of the "*clergy* and *laity*." While we have mentioned only Romanists and Protestents, who suppose all spiritual work is to be performed, by a few officials, we are forced to admit, that others,

as Baptists and often disciples of Christ, are quite as decided, that all value is given to the ordinances of religion, by the grace of official hands.

Baptist teachers, in our acquaintance, are unwilling to admit that, Baptism or the Lord's Supper, is legally administered by a Romanist or Protestant; such as Presbyterians, Methodists, etc., and if any one from these orders, should signify a willingness to associate with the Baptists at the Supper of the Lord, he is informed it cannot be suffered. If pressed, as to the reason for refusing fellowship at the table, he is promptly told that, "he is not a member of the true church, and has not been baptized by a *regularly ordained minister* of the church," Thus, while our Baptist brethren, bravely oppose the clerical assumptions of Rome and England, they in fact, profess precisely the same thing. They assume that their ministers have come in a regular line from the Apostles of Christ, and therefore, no one without the manipulation of Baptist hands, is authorized to partake with them of the Supper, or administer a single ordinance of the Lord. But, how much nearer the truth, are those who recommend the Bible as the only authorative creed, and yet, maintain that, ministers of religion are *made* by regular consecration to official authority? Call them Apostles, Evangelists, Preachers, Pastors, Bishops, Acolytes, Elders, or Deacons—no one has the right to act, or the power to confer the grace of the church, who is not thus raised from the ranks of the body, called out from the church, to minister in holy things, and dedicated to the work. We have known, old and, apparently wise men, amongst us, to travel hundreds of miles, to *initiate* others into what they call the "elders office." The people too, love to have matters in this fashion, and many imagine, this is the true mode of conducting the affairs of the kingdom of heaven.

We will relate an incident, which sufficiently, illustrates the dogma of official grace. Years since, we were called to see a man of wealth and influence die. When we entered the room, Doctor L. a distinguished Episcopal preacher, was at the bed side. His words, to the man who was fearfully trembling on the verge of another world, with the full consciousness he was not ready for the solemn change were, "I am a regular minister of the Gospel, my authority to administer the sacraments, has regularly descended to me from the Apostles of Christ, and if you will consent, I

will administer to you the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and I believe that, by virtue of the grace that will flow to you through my sacred office, you will be willing to die."

While we have stated the occurrence plainly, the picture is by no means over wrought, and yet, any one must see that Mr. L. imagined that, he was Christ's legate—was his Ambassador—and the whole grace of God, was administered through his official hands. Not only do Romanists and Episcopalians tenaciously adhere to the opinion, that all spiritual blessings—that the salvation of the soul, and eternal life—are promised through official administrators of the ordinances, but the more modern sects, which claim official authority to minister in matters essential, substantially, claim the same mystic power. There lies before us a little work of 82 pages, by a distingnished Professor in our most respected "Bible College," on the "Eldership" in which the writer assumes that, elders are officers *made* by certain ceremonies in the churches, and the "Elders constitute a teaching and ruling board, one of whom is a preacher, who lives of the Gospel," while others bear their own expenses, in aiding to rule. This, the writer says, "Is scriptural and wise." Page 67. These things bring fully before us,

THE DOCTRINE OF RITUALISM AS HELD IN THE DENOMINATIONS.

The ritualistic theory has recently taken many of the English clergy into the full embraces of Rome. Methodist, not a few have doubted the validity of their ordination, and fled to the English and Romish churches. There is, in fact, a strong tendency amongst us who profess to be governed by the Bible, to seek *higher* authority in what some suppose existed in ancient churches. There is evidently no authority for official power, in any church described in the Bible. The controversies, however, growing out of the theory of official grace and salvation, must continue to excite the religious mind, till the question is fully examined in the light of truth. Is it the doctrine of God?—is it from heaven? or of the earth and earthy? Does the New Testament teach that, it is by virtue of an office possessed by men, spiritual blessings are enjoyed?

We desire not to dogmatize, and if we understand our true purposes, our sole desire is that, the truth of God, as it was written by the Spirit, may shine in all lands. We claim, at least, honesty of intention, and we think we have enjoyed as favorable opportunities in studying the truth as our contemporaries, and we give it as our solemn conclusion that, the whole doctrine of "*ritualism*," as taught in the Romish, English, and other sects, is not in the Bible, in whole, or in part; that, it is the child of the wicked one, that it virtually subverts the authority of Christ, and while it prevails, the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ cannot be appreciated.

While we doubt not the truth of our conclusions, we are assured that, we are fallible, and if in error, we would gladly receive correction. So far, we have looked at the subject negatively; and yet, it will be respectful to all concerned to examine the whole question of clerical authority from a positive standpoint.

We are fully aware that members of the church of Christ, in ancient times, were known as apostles, prophets, pastors, leaders, shepherds, bishops, evangelists, elders, deacons, and ministers; and we are also fully satisfied that, the same distinguishing names, are appropriate for the servants of God in the present age; but we stoutly maintain that, such names are *incidental*, and characteristic of labor, and never were conferred by sacred authority, as official designations. We are satisfied moreover, that, all elections and ceremonies employed to *make* officers in the church, are self-assumed, devoid of scriptural authority,—are the offspring of the great apostacy, anti-christian in all their tendencies, and that any religious administration through such authority, is not of God, not spiritual, not from above, but is of this world, and altogether worldly.

In the course of our investigations, we think that, we shall be able to give substantial reasons for so sweeping conclusions. We protest against theories, and declare that, we have no pride to gratify in the advocation of these things, and we faithfully promise to abandon any and every error which may be pointed out.

We propose to examine, historically and critically, the main titles which are pronounced official.

APOSTLES—WHY?

The word apostle, literally, denotes one sent.

1. Our Savior is called an apostle, because the Father sent him. Paul said, Heb. 3, 1: "Consider the apostle and high priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." The designation, we repeat, was incidental to his mission from heaven to earth; and certainly implies no investiture of authority.

2. The twelve disciples, when sent to preach the coming kingdom, were called "the twelve apostles of Christ." The word implied no particular work, and no authority to perform any service whatever. True, much service was performed by them, in obedience to special instructions given, but they acted merely as the servants of Christ. They were seated on twelve thrones, as law-givers, and their names were inscribed in the twelve foundations of the temple of God.

3. Banrabas, who was sent out with Paul, was called anApostle, though he was not among the twelve. He was doubtless considered the apostle of the church at Antioch, and hence, with Paul, he returned and reported his success to the church which recommended him.

4. Epaphroditus was called the (messenger) *Apostolon* of the church at Phillippi, Phil. ii, 25. Other churches had Apostles,—perhaps all had.

5. In 2 Cor., viii, 23, we read of the (*apostoloi*) *Apostles* as messengers of the churches; and hence, we conclude that, not only the ancient churches had apostles, but it is proper for all churches to support apostles in their service.

We presume the angels of the seven churches of Asia were apostles of the congregations, in the service of their brethren. In all these examples, we discover that, the only condition of apostleship, was in being sent, by Christ, by churches, or by a single church; but there is nothing indicative of official meaning in the word; and special instructions, as we have noted, were always given as to the work which engaged their energies.

We call attention to

THE WORD EVANGELIST.

The Greek word *Evaggelistees*, rendered Evangelist, which denotes a Gospel preacher, occurs only three times in the New Testament.

Philip, one of the seven placed to feed the Grecian widows at Jerusalem, was after his preaching at Samaria, and other places, mentioned as "The Evangelist," Acts xxi, 8. This work gave to him the name. Timothy was exhorted by Paul to "Do the work of an Evangelist." 2 Tim., iv, 5; "and again, we have mention of extraordinary Evangelists." Eph. iv, 11.

In all these occurences, the word, evidently, is used merely to designate the person who preached the glad tidings, and had no reference whatever to official dignity.

We may derive profit by a brief examination of the history of preaching and preachers. While we have noted the preaching of the twelve apostles, we should not neglect to mention the preaching of the seventy disciples, who were sent out, two-and-two, to the lost sheep of Israel. When they returned and said, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name," He said unto them, "I beheld satan, as lightning, fall from heaven." Luke x, 17; or, "I beheld satan fall, as lightning falls from heaven." From that date, satan's power was greatly curtailed on earth. It will not be resumed. We have but little, beyond the mere report, that the seventy preached the name of Christ, and wondrous things were achieved by their labor. Of their distinguishing titles we have nothing.

The twelve apostles, after the resurrection of Messiah, though authorized to preach, were prohibited from commencing, till the descent of the Holy Spirit to enlighten them, to lead them into all truth, and enable them to open the door of salvation to a lost world. Their subsequent history is continued in the Acts written by Luke.

We are asked next,

WHO ARE THE EVANGELISTS IN THIS AGE?

From the narative given, the church is composed of "living stones," as we have often quoted, "built up a spiritual house, an

holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. ii, 5. This scripture seems to teach that christians, in consequence of constituting parts of a spiritual house, and a holy priesthood, are fully authorized from their positions in the body, to exert their whole powers of body, soul, and spirit in behalf of the cause of Christ.

We see in the instance of the first church planted, where the members were driven from their houses by persecution, "They went everywhere preaching the word." Acts viii, 4. In the proper meaning of the word *preaching*, we consider it the privilege and duty of every christian on earth, to preach the good news of life and salvation from the hour of entering the kingdom to the hour of death. It is trne, we do not suppose it is the privilege of every member, male and female, black and white, old and young, to attempt religious orations, as is the current practice. Indeed, we are assured that sermonizing as now performed, was unknown in the christian world in the primitive church. It is a modern invention. But surely, there has not been a time since the descent of the Holy Spirit, when it has not been proper, and altogether becoming, for any christian to plead with the lost to receive Jesus Christ as the only Savior. Paul said, "Do I now persuade men, or God?" Evidently, he persuaded, not God, because he was ever willing to receive the lost, but he prayed men, to be reconciled to God, to save themselves from this untoward generation.

WHAT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN THE COURSE OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCHES REGARDING PREACHERS AND PREACHING.

So soon as any number of believers submitted themselves unreservedly to the authority of Christ, it was proper, and necessary; to their growth in grace, and their usefulness in the world, to give themselves to each other. To be subject every one to his brethren. The rule which governed in this submission to each other, sprung from the intelligence and faithful life of each. Hence, Paul said, "I beseech you, brethren, you know the house of Stephanus, that it is the first fruits of Achia, and that they have

addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, that you submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us and laboreth." 1 Cor., xvi, 15.

In this instance. the disciples were exhorted to note the membership of the family of Stephanus, because they had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. If there was a spiritual ministration of the first saints in Corinth, should there not be a similar ministration of the Saints, in every congregation, in our age? To the *helpers* and *workers,* all were to submit, and on no other ground was any one entitled to respect.

From this and divers other examples and intimations, we are not only satisfied that, in the churches planted by the apostles, all were one, all were really equal. there was neither "Jew, nor Greek, male nor female, but all were one in Christ—all were the children of God, by faith in Christ." One was not to be respected above another in entering the Church. All were authorized to work with the ability which God had given. But in the natural course of things, there could but be mental differences, and exist as wide differences in the performances of the various members. Some in every church possess greater intellectual powers than others; some are better educated, are more serious in their habits; and some are more active physically, mentally, and morally, than others. Of course, some, from natural and acquired fitness, would very soon excel others, as earnest teachers, exhorters and worshipers in every department. The result would be that, some would give higher evidence than others of ability to bear the message of salvation to the world. Such, in the primitive churches, were designated as the chosen of the churches, and went forth as apostles, angels, and ministers of the congregations, to sound out the gospel to the sinful sons and daughters of earth. Such, also, were helped on their way by the congregations that gave them to the work. When in foreign climes, the churches were in the habit "of sending once and again, to the necessities" of their servants.

But wishing to be as specific as possible on the subject, we will attempt to answer a few questions which are usually asked in regard to Evangelists.

SHOULD NOT PREACHERS BE EDUCATED?

We are in favor of universal education. We would rejoice to see all the people of our time, scholars in every department of learning. We regard education,—classical, mathematical, scientific and metaphysical, of incomparable value to preachers. Yet, some of the most successful preachers amongst us, can barely read in a becoming manner. Indeed, we have known several excellent preachers that could not read at all. They knew the facts of the Gospel, believed that Jesus died for the sins of the world, were earnest and humble christians, and really, were much more efficient in the cause of truth and righteousness, than many college graduates. Still we are certain that, every species of information should be made available by the minister of truth. As to the true worth of what we usually call "Bible colleges," we need give no opinions at present. In them, we doubtless may find much to approve. If they are aids in qualifiying the brethren for usefulness, we should bid them God speed. The period, however, spent in "systematic theology," we presume, is a great waste of time and money. We would, by all means, urge upon christians, and especially upon young men who determine to labor in word and teaching, to learn to *articulate* the *English alphabet*, to spell correctly, and to read, speak, and write intelligibly. This is the most important department of a literary course for a preacher.

We would also have preachers, if possible, to study mathematics, logic, rhetoric, psycology, history, natural science, chemistry, the classics, and Hebrew. They should know everything; and yet, they can be valuable laborers in the Lord's vineyard, in the possession of a good stock of common sense, an acquaintance with the truths of the Bible, and a fervent desire to honor God.

WHO ARE TO CALL PREACHERS TO THE WORK?

In every congregation care should be taken to develop the whole talent of the membership, and put it into useful exercise. Usually, the seniors of the congregations, whose mission it is to

feed the sheep, to confirm the weak, and encourage all in the ways of the Lord, are the proper persons to call out the talent of the younger members.

There may be instances, however, when a quite different course would suggest itself. It is said of Saul that, after he was baptized, received meat, and was strengthened, he spent certain days with the disciples at Damascus, and straightway preached Christ, in the synagogue that, he is the son of God. He increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who were at Damascus, proving that Jesus is the very Christ. Acts ix, 20-21.

This is an instance of an educated and strong man becoming a christian, and beginning at once, without consulting any one, so far as we are informed, to preach Jesus Christ. He stated, that after his call to serve Christ, and preach him among the heathen, "Immediately, he conferred not with flesh and blood; but fled from persecution, and went into Arabia, and after three years ascended to Jerusalem to see Peter."

There is no evidence of any church action in regard to the entrance of Paul upon his labor as an evangelist. God called him to the work; and he calls every christian to labor to the utmost of his ability. We do not mean by this, that every one must act entirely upon his own judgment, or from his own impulses, regarding his work in, or out of the church. All, we have seen, are to be subject one to another; and all christians in apostolic times, who went amongst strangers, bore letters of commendation from their brethren. One of the greatest evils we have encountered in this country, has been the lawless course of men assuming the right to preach, and ask pay for it, without the slightest sanction of the brethren. Many have thus acted, who, after being detected in wickedness, made their impious boast that they were not members of any particular church. Such wandering stars, should be countenanced by no christian people.

SHOULD NOT MEN BE ORDAINED TO PREACH?

If the inquiry is to the effect that, preachers should have the sanction of their brethren in their efforts to preach, we would say, by all means, they should be sent, or recommended to the work. We have, however, no instance of what the churches now call

"ordination," as a preparation, condition or quallfication to preach. The practice of electing one to preach, and then attempting to consecrate him to the work, by prayer, fasting, and the imposition of hands, is not found in the Holy Scriptures. Are we asked, if the seven were not ordained at Jesusalem to feed the widows? There is no word in the Scriptures, which means, ordain in the sense of investiture of authority to perform any work. Men of certain qualifications were needed to take care of certain Greek women in the church, and when Peter gave the requisite traits for the labor, the brethren designated persons qualified, and the apostles prayed, and *extended their hands to them.* There is no evidence that by this course, the seven were made deacons, evangelists, pastors, or other officials. One of them, we have seen, was called "The Evangelist," but no one supposes it was in consequence of the prayer and extension of the hands of the apostles.

Before closing our investigations of this department of our labor, we should notice with more care the practice of fasting, praying, and employing the hands, in placing christians where they could work to the greatest advantage.

At Antioch, after Paul and Barnabus had been preaching at least ten years, it is said the seniors "Fasted, prayed, and laid their hands on them and sent them away." Acts xiii, 3. Still, no one imagines, we presume, that Paul and Barnabus were thus ordained to the ministry, or became deacons, elders, or preachers, by what was done. The sole purpose of the proceedings was to "commend them to the work," to which the spirit had called them. That is, to go to Asia Minor as preachers of the gospel of peace. But there is no such idea in the passage as making officers.

Regarding the ordination, or consecration of preachers, we beg leave to call attention to a few incidents, which may throw light on the subject.

If we should be reminded that the Savior "ordained the twelve apostles," we would reply that he "selected or chose twelve,whom he called apostles, and sent them forth to preach the gospel." Mark iii, 14. Another wrote, that "These twelve, Jesus sent forth, and commanded them to preach, heal the sick," etc. Matt. x, 5-8. Again, it is said, "He called his disciples and chose twelve, whom he named apostles." Luke vi, 13.

In these passages, we see nothing resembling, in the slightest degree, the practice of modern churches initiating into office. The creeds of the apostacy say, "Receive the Holy Ghost, for the office and work of a bishop now given to thee, by the imposition of our hands." We presume all parties have about the same view. They confer the Holy Spirit, or official authority; or they mean nothing, and the whole performance is but a ridiculous farce. Do the ordainers confer the spirit or divine authority to do anything? If we are told that in the case of Judas, one was to be ordained in his place as a witness, we would reply that there is no word in the passage answering to ordain; but Peter said, "There should be (*genesthai*) one with us—a witness of the resurrection." More cannot be discovered from the passage. Lots were cast, and the lot fell on Matthias.

Years since, we were introduced to a preacher, who was a graduate of our most respected college, whom we invited to "open the services of the evening, by singing and prayer." His sad reply was, "I cannot—I never performed such service." We asked him, "Are you not a preacher?" He answered, "I *have license*." The school had given him the commission, but he had not exercised his talent.

Were preachers made in this manner in ancient times? Not long since, an aspiring youth said to us, "I want to preach." We answered, "It is your privilege, if you possess the ability, have the consent of your brethren, and desire to honor your Maker." He soon after returned, and said, "I want to be ordained to preach." We answered, "Gospel preachers are not made in this manner." He went away, and we saw him no more,

While it is an old saying that "An honest confession is good for the soul," we with shame-facedness, freely confess the ignorance of our youth regarding the modern mode of becoming a preacher. We ardently desired to be initiated into the preacher's office, by ordination—by fasting, prayer, and the imposition of many hands upon our head. At nineteen, we were ordained, When we had seen our twentieth birthday, our older brethren thought that our growth required that we should be made an "elder." Our locks were black, our cheeks were ruddy, and our young blood regarded not the qualities of age and experience, but our brethren said, you must be ordained an elder. The day was appointed, the fasting was endured, the prayers were offered, the

many hands descended on our poor ignorant head, and from that day to this, we have been called Elder. If asked what we now think of the procedure, we would answer, that we regard all such performances as the result of very great ignorance, for which there is no authority in the word of God.

Are we asked how preachers are made according to the scriptures? We answer, that we have found in the word of life no ordinance or ceremony by which one is qualified as minister, or inducted into the service of evangelist. Yet, we maintain that there is a clearly defined process in the word of God, through which the saints rise to useful labor in the churches. Paul said, "By speaking the truth in love, we GROW up into him in all things—even in Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying itself in love." Eph. iv, 15-16.

When the members of the body are properly fitted, and joined in every part, each grows up into the Savior, in all things; and in this manner, the whole body makes increase, by building itself up in love. How do feeble children become stout men and women? We have discovered no machinery by which infants can instantly be transformed into persons of age, experience, and wisdom. The process may seem slow and tedious, but by temperate living, suitable exercise, and proper nourishment, very feeble babes grow to be powerful men. In this manner alone are evangelists made. They are taught, and raised up in the church, are educated by church influences, and in time, become efficient and useful members in Christ Jesus.

The hot bed system of making preachers, by other influences beside those in the church, we consider of doubtful bearing, and we would therefore exhort parents, by all means, to train up their children in the instruction and admonition of the Lord; with the assurance that a child trained up as he should go, when he is old, will not depart from it.

THE SCRIPTURAL PLAN OF SOUNDING OUT THE TRUTH.

While we have shown beyond all reasonable doubt, that all christians are "Kings and priests, fully authorized to offer accept-

able sacrifices to God, and should be filled with all goodness and knowledge, and able to admonish one another, (Rom. xv, 14), and furthermore, that all saints are required as circumstances may offer, to preach Jesus to the world, we maintain that it was the custom of the ancient churches to send their evangelists, apostles, angels, servants, or messengers, into different sections of the earth to preach Jesus Christ.

What is taught, we may be asked, as to the procedure of the churches in giving their servants to the work? At Antioch, we have seen, when it became necessary to send Paul and Barnabas, —both well tried and faithful ministers of the truth,—into Asia Minor, the teachers and seniors fasted and prayed, and extended their hands to them, and sent them away." Acts xiii, 3.

The spirit said, "*Separate* me, Barnabas and Saul." The Greek word "*aphorisate*," means set off by bounds, limit off, or separate, or set apart for a special work. The members of the church should be separated for every department of labor. The fasting and prayer are becoming, and full of meaning; and while we hesitate as to laying hands on the head, the ancient custom of extending the hands to each other, is not only full of meaning, but is also the token of all solemn covenants between friends, and especially between the people of God. The words in Greek are, "*Epithentos tas cheiros autois*," which we render, "*They extended their hands to them.*" The pronouns in this verse, and in Acts vi, 6, are in the *dative*, and should read, "gave their hands to them."

"When James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace extended to Paul, they gave to Paul and Barnabas, the right hands of fellowship, that they should go to the gentiles, and the three others should labor still with the circumcision." Gal. ii, 9.

These passages indicate what seems to be the scriptural practice with inspired men, in the employment of the hands on occasions of great solemnity; but we promise in another place, an examination of the subject.

The extending of hands conferred no authority, so far as we can discover, but it was the act by which the early christians expressed their hearty sanction to the cause of each other, and thus they bade each other God-speed.

The evangelists went forth in the full confidence that the Lord

would feed and clothe them, by putting it into the hearts of the brethren, to give proper evidence of fruit. Hence, we read that the churches failed not to "Help the evangelists on their way," and to send often to their necessities Phil. iv, 13.

We have heard of preachers who say, "If the brethren do not pay,we will not work." Such,we think, ought not to preach. They might be classed amongst hirelings. True men make up their mind in obedience to their brethren, to give themselves to the work of the Lord, with the assurance their wants will be abundantly supplied. The brother who forsakes houses, and lands, with friends and relations, for Christ, has the promise of houses, lands, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, and all he could ask of this worlds enjoyments. We are furthermore fully satisfied that should any preacher fail to receive a competency, it will be his own fault—he is not qualified for the place, and should direct his efforts into another channel. All the very earnest ministers we have, however, have seen failed to complain of want. Independence in lovingly speaking the truth, fails not to insure earth's richest blessings.

While we have but little faith in modern missionary schemes, and new plans to save the world, we have an abiding confidence that if we properly teach the saints, and implicitly rely upon them for aid, we shall not be disappointed.

"THE WORK OF THE EVANGELIST."

Time and space would fail us to fully show all that is required of the faithful stewart of Christ.

1. It is the work of the evangelist to preach the gospel. This does not mean to deliver religious orations; but it signifies the labor of turning the hearts of the people from sin to God, by teaching the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. The modern revival plan of converting the people, by inflamatory, or sympathetic speeches, does, in our judgment, great harm. Persons led to make a profession in false ways, seldom, if ever, stand firm in their position, but often become discouraged, and feeling that they are ignorant, and hypocritical, their hearts become sickened, and they frequently close their eyes to the truth. The purpose is to

show the lost, the love of God in the gift of his son. When the heart is reached through the understanding, and the soul is subdued by faith in the Christ, there is but little to fear as to final perseverance in the right. The preacher should be able to remove difficulties, and instruct in the faith, repentance, confession, surrender in baptism, and rising to walk in newness of life.

2. When the converts are fully consecrated to God, the next work of the preacher is to place in one, the disciples, as circumstances shall suggest, in order that they may receive the sincere milk of the word, and grow up as calves of the stall. From the hour of submission to God, and giving themselves to each other, in the fear of God, the evangelist is required to see that the disciples continue steadfast in the apostle's teaching, in prayer, in the breaking of bread, and all the exercises of the Lord's people, both of a public and private character. Most unfortunately for the cause, many preachers have learned but little beyond the beginning lessons, and as Paul said, "When the converts ought to be teachers of others, they have need that one teach them again, the beginning of the oracles of God." Heb. v, 12, Incompetency in evangelists for the work, is the main cause of the ignorance and want of spiritual life in the congregations. The mission of many seems to close, with the bare enlistment of the members. But feeble efforts are made to enable them to grow up into the Lord in all things. We need wiser and better workers in the vineyard of the Lord. The churches often fail to purify the heart, and educate the members up to the spiritual standard of the apostles. It is worse than useless to bring converts into the church, without enabling them to strengthen and grow in grace. We who preach are most at fault.

3. The evangelists are to set in order all things wanting in the churches, and see that each member is occupying the place to which his qualifications assign him.

For this purpose, Timothy was left at Ephesus, and Titus in Crete. The first work of Timothy was to "Charge some that they teach no other doctrine," nor "Give heed to fables and endless genalogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying." In the second place, he was required to see that the members were all working in their proper spheres. Some aspired to overlooking the flock, and while Timothy admitted it a good work, he so fully explained the qualifications of overseers or

bishops, that likely not a few shrunk from the responsibility. In reference to placing members in their work, Paul exhorted to "Extend hands speedily to no one." That is to say,—See that all placed in very responsible positions, are fully competent for the labor. Prove them by their works, and to be slow in encouraging any one upon doubtful reports.

Titus also was exhorted to "properly (*Katasteesees*) place the seniors, or older persons, in every city." Hence, he was instructed in reference to the work of the elder men, the elder women, the younger women, and the younger men. This is a work almost wholly overlooked by modern preachers.

Paul and Barnabas thought not of bidding adieu to the churches in Asia Minor, without extending the hands to the seniors in every church. In this, we find nothing in reference to choosing, appointing, or making elders for the churches, but their mission was merely to wisely place the members in each church. In this way, they confirmed and strengthened the weak members. We beg to repeat that this is a department of Evangelical labor, that has been but imperfectly studied, and possibly, more is to be gained by the preachers of this age in an earnest direction to the proper adjustment of the members of the body, than in any other work.

4. In the fourth place, the care of all the churches rests, to a great extent, upon the planters of the congregations, the setters in order of the things wanting, the confirmers of the saints, and the men who give their lives to the cause of the Master. They are the great workers of the world, and it is through their influence, mainly, that the churches and members grow strong in the Lord, and exercise a christian influence on the world. They call forth the talent of the brethren, old and young, male and female, into full exercise, and thus, through the living, working churches, the world becomes more and more leavened, and in the eternal state, true evangelists will rejoice in the salvation of themselves and the many they aided in their struggles to overcome the world, and gain the promised crown.

If we have been successful in suggesting the manner in which christians become evangelists, and indicated but feebly their work and reward, the labor of showing the history of other co-operants, will be by no means difficult. We are prepared to hear the conclusions of others, who may think they do not agree with us.

THE SUPPORT OF THE MINISTRY.

From the very delicate nature of the subject of ministerial support, it should be treated with special reference to scriptural authority. In worldly matters, the most energetic and persevering are usually the most prosperous; but in matters spiritual, results are somewhat different. The most intelligent, devoted, and hard-working preachers of the gospel, frequently exhibit the poorest ability for accumulating or enjoying the goods of the world. Such men as Peter, John, and Paul, possessed neither taste, leisure, nor capacity for indulging in the gratifications of the flesh. In modern times, however, many claiming to be ambassadors of Christ, are but slaves of their appetites; and their main studies are with reference to the things of time. In contemplating the differences between the course of the ancient and modern teachers of religion, it will become us to ascertain what the scriptures say regarding the living of the ministers of grace.

1. When our Savior sent out the twelve apostles, he said, "Go, preach, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils, freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses. Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat." Matt. x, 7–10.

It will be remembered that these ministers of truth were to go amongst enemies—amongst people who would oppose the new religion, and yet, as God numbered the very hairs of their heads, as sheep amongst wolves, they were to rely upon their heavenly Father for food and raiment. Without the second coat, the second pair of shoes,—without money, or even a sack in which to carry their treasures, they went forth, confiding in the Lord to supply them. During the three years and six months of the Lord's personal ministry, his servants were abundantly supplied, and just before he suffered, he said to them, "When I sent you without purse and scrip, and shoes, lacked you anything? And they said, nothing." At this juncture, the Savior, for a short space, left the disciples to their own philosophy. He told them to "Take purse, scrip, and money, with swords, if they thought they

could direct themselves." They did so, but from their speedy errors, they were soon satisfied that they were not sufficient for the work before them.

The leading thought, and at least the spirit of the apostolic mission, should ever dwell in the hearts of modern preachers of the gospel. They should remember that if they make no earthly sacrifices,—if they suffer not for the cause here, their reward will be poor in the world to come. Whoever, therefore, preach for the loaves and fishes,—for the ease and gain of earth, *have* their reward here, and should anticipate nothing good in the future.

2. The Lord afterwards, "Appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two, before his face into every city and place into which he himself would come. Behold, said he, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse nor scrip, nor shoes. Into whatsoever house you enter, if the son of peace be there, remain, eating and drinking such things as they give. For the laborer is worthy of his hire." Luke x, 1–7.

We notice again that these were to go in the faith, the Lord would sustain them. They were to be "As wise as serpents and harmless as doves," and were to act in so earnest and attractive a manner as to secure a living, even among strangers and opposers. Where received, they were to remain, "eating, with thankful hearts, whatever was given to them," asking no questions. This living was called (*misthos*)—*hire*, or reward.

It is enough to know that the seventy lived, did good service, and prospered in their mission.

In the apostolic churches, we have seen that the truth was "Sounded out by the angels, messengers, and evangelists of the churches. Paul and Barnabas were helped on their way by the brethren of the church from which they were sent forth to the work. In Asia Minor, in Greece, or elsewhere, the Lord opened the hearts of the people to assist them in things needful. Churches planted by them "sent often" to the necessities of these humble servants of the Master. Phil. iv, 15. We invite earnest attention to a few plain rules furnished by the spirit. Paul said,

1. "The Lord hath ordained that they who preach the gospel, should live of the gospel," 1 Cor. ix, 14.

2. "The ox," under the law, "that trampled out the corn was not to be muzzled." Or in very plain words, the ox that did the

work was to be fed; and the application is that the servant of the Lord who does his work,—not he that is seeking a place to give him bread,—should be amply supplied. The ox, however, that thrashed no wheat, was to be given to the butcher, and the preacher who brings none of the lost into the sheep fold, should be delivered to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, in order to the preservation of the spirit in the body of Christ.

3. Paul said, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things?" 1 Cor. ix, 11.

From these, and various other scriptures, we can but conclude that there is no obligation of a more binding character than that of supplying the wants of men who give their time and energies to the preaching of the gospel. There is a rule also for the government of christians in the distribution of their earnings. "On the first day of the week, they were to lay by, or deposit in the treasury, as the Lord had prospered them." 1 Cor. xui, 1. If we should be told this is the instruction that was to govern in raising means for the poor saints in Judea, but not intended to apply in the support of evangelists; we would reply, that the *manner* of doing the work has a general application. There are, to be sure, instances in which our benevolence is to be exercised in different ways. If one should find a poor man fallen among thieves, suffering and ready to die from cold and hunger, should he not promptly relieve him if in his power? As to the manner, the wants of the sufferer suggest every duty. There is a general rule, however, given to direct in our contributions for all purposes. Paul said, "He who soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly, and he who soweth bountifully, shall also reap bountifully."

4. "Every man, according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, as of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver." 2 Cor. ix, 6, 7. Christians should study as to the obligations that rest upon them, and then act, as their hearts, fully enlightened, may dictate.

We should also consider

THE MANNER OF CONTRIBUTING.

There are two modes of giving revealed in the scriptures. The first, consists in contributing to be seen of men. This may be in

public subscriptions, and especially when ostentatiously made with speculative purposes, lurking in a stingy heart. Some of the closest-fisted men we have known, have been ready subscribers, on a large scale, when their benevolence was to find passage in the newspapers through the country. Were the Savior speaking, he would say, "They *have* their reward." In christian benevolence, however, every step should be taken in the presence of, and in the fear of God. "The left hand is not to know what the right hand does. The alms are to be in secret,—our good deeds should not be intended for the public eye, and our Father who sees in secret, will reward openly and abundantly his servants.

We would inquire in reference to

HIRELINGS.—WHO ARE THEY.?

Jesus said, "He that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep. An hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep." John x, 10–12.

It is quite plain, the hireling is he who makes a profession of the ministry, for the sake of the living that is in it. He says, "I will not preach without a salary." He gives notice that he will hold protracted meetings, if called, but is careful to settle the terms of service by the day, week, month, year, or trip, and come what may, the stipulated hire must be forthcoming according to contract. The mercenary view of the preacher's calling may lead many idle, inefficient, irreligious and worldly men into the preachers' vocation. The notion of making preachers by *wages, hire*, or *salary*, and respecting them for *office*, does not seem to accord with the scriptural rules. We presume, at least, that the New Testament ministers were of a different class. Finally, we should inquire as to the true ground of respect due

THE PREACHERS OF THE GOSPEL.

With disciples of Christ, it is scarcely necessary to mention the high sounding titles often assumed by preachers. If we mistake not, there are not a few who are so weak as to glory in being called "Reverend, Elder, Deacon, Bishop, Pastor, Parson," etc., all of which, to say the least, when used officially, are assumed titles, and not at all becoming to the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. Even the truth of God becomes a lie, when perverted from its scriptural application. The notorious Joseph Smith, Sen., of Mormon memory, feeling conscious of his exceedingly sinful life, often expressed astonishment that the Lord should honor him with so important *offices* in the church.

When the members of the Romish mother are told that several of their popes were noted for their crimes and impunity of life, they have freely admitted the facts, but they take consolation in the opinion that the *office* was preserved in all its purity, notwithstanding the corruptions of the agents. We have seen men in the various denominations who freely admitted the wickedness of their officials, but they plead earnestly for the validity of the offices, even in bloody hands. From this view, it is not difficult to see with what cheerfulness men can reverence the presumed office bearers in the churches.

In the scriptures we find no authority for reverencing either men, officers, or offices All, from the least to the greatest, are measured by their individual personal worth. "By their works, by what they really are, and not by deceptive rules, are they known. Grapes do not grow on thorns, nor figs on thistles."

Are we reminded that Paul exhorted the brethren to "Remember them who have the rule over them?" We reply that the passage is thus quoted to support a theory. Paul never exhorted any people to respect merely an officer, or ruler, but earnestly besought the brethren to properly regard the *workers* in Zion. It should read, "Remember your laborers, (the leaders among you,) who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation—Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, and to-day, and forever." Heb. xiii, 7. 8

The brethren were to respect them because they had preached

the truth,—were chief men in the labor requisite, and because of their daily conversation in regard to Jesus Christ. Morning, noon, and evening, their words were with reference to the crucified and risen Savior. The same thought is suggested by Paul in the words, "We beseech you, brethren, to know them who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, or (*Proistamenous*) are *superiors in the Lord*, and admonish you. And to esteem them very highly in love for their work sake." Thes. v. 12.

Ministers of religion, from these scriptures, are to be honored on account of their work,—their real worth, and upon no other ground. As the Lord said of his people, "By their works you shall know them." The faithful minister of Christ should be amply supported, loved, and honored, for his self denial, his devotion to the Master, and his achievements in the cause of truth.

BEHIND EVERY CLOUD THE SUN IS SHINING.

A composition read by Miss Sallie Harris, of Atlanta, at the Annual of Hope Institute, June, 1873.

I wish that command of language were mine, so that I could clearly represent the power and beauty of this sentence. Before my mental gaze it calls up visions of such perfect rest and peace, that my soul longs to cross over to that beautiful realm, and yet my pen falters, and my words are weak and powerless to express all this brief line embodies. "Behind every cloud the sun is shining."

Oh! poor souls, whose tears have been your meat day and night, can you form even a faint conception of its blessedness? Can you see a region where the dark cloud of your pilgrimage here shall be banished forever? If your sight could penetrate these clouds, and catch a glimpse of that land where heart never burdens, darkness never comes, and where hunger and thirst are unknown, would not your hearts say, if your lips were silent, Oh happy home, Oh blessed abode? We who are soldiers of Christ cannot always be marching and fighting. The evening will come, the shadows will gather, and we must go to the quiet tents of the grave. There we shall sleep for awhile, until the darkness of night passes away; and at the dawn of the great morning, the

trumpet will sound for the resurrection, we will come up in a line of light, the sword of christian confllict gleaming in the unsetting sun. Well may our bodies be content to remain in the dark and cheerless grave for awhile, if, at last, they shall rise from it, and find a home which the rays of the sun always brighten.

In our land we sometimes meet with vegetable forms without graceful foliage or fruit that attracts us, while in the root are buried medicinal qualities of inestimable value. So it is with human beings. We meet those who have no form or comliness we admire, but when the clouds which obscure their true character pass away, we may discern the light of kindness and true affection. The poet who first said, "Behind every cloud the sun is shining," bestowed a great favor upon the doubting, despairing race—man. Many persons bowed down by grief, have been incited by his words to raise their drooping spirits, and to look forward to happiness yet unseen.

"Hush, sad heart, and cease repining,
Behind each cloud the sun is shining,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary."

Sadness often finds its way to us, heavy and dull, blighting and chill. It shuts out the light from our hearts and homes, and fills us with gloom difficult to vanish. It mars our hopes defies our wills. If we are christians, we should stand firm, and not sink under the burden. It may be well for us to be tried, for the Lord loveth whom he chastiseth. So when God by his smiles has swept away the clouds of trouble, and joy has flowed back into our hearts, it will be the more appreciated, and the bright smile of happiness will beautifully contrast with the dark frown of sorrow. The clouds may hang low, but we must not despair. Does not the brightest sun of autumn show clouds that drift their rugged edges over its disc? At noon, on the banks of some limpid river, the mist floats in flakes, at first, light as love's smiles, but soon, its circle widens, and veils all objects in its dreary covering. Earth mourns, but when the clouds are sifted by the sun's bright rays, the sweet blue sky will again be seen. Dark as the present may be, there is always a glimpse of the beautiful thereafter, to light and cheer the heart panting under its

heavy trials. There is pleasure in the thought that the sweet hopes that come to naught in this unsatisfying world, shall there bud and bloom and bring forth glorious fruit.

The person who stands upon the summit of a mountain peak during a thunder storm, sometimes sees the clouds rolling in grandeur through the vales below,—the lightning leaping along the sides of the peak beneath his feet. In the valley, which is shut out from the light of the sun, the inhabitants are enveloped in gloom, while he who stands above the clouds, basks in the pure light of heaven.

> "As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
> Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm,
> Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
> Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

So the devoted christian may rise above the storms of this life, and plant his feet upon the rock of ages. Beyond the dark clouds of earth rolls the great ocean of llght. On the "other side" the sunlight falls softly. Here, shadows pass over us, the mists of sorrow envelop us, but beyond, the ken of our mortal vision—behind the clouds are silver linings. Here we "pass under the rod," our brightest prospects are blighted, our sweetest anticipations crushed, fond friends taken, the purest ties of affection are broken.

Faith tells us when life's fitful fever is o'er, we may rise above this earthly sphere to the celestial light of the Eternal Home. We should be encouraged by the thought that, "Behind every cloud the sun is shining." If now, the shadows fall, we may look to the bright hereafter. If tempests spend their fury here, we may look to the peaceful calm of an eternal day. If sorrow spreads her dark mantle over our lives—if severe afflictions lacerate our spirits, we may look to that world where all our sorrows will be banished, and our wounds healed. If our friends are snatched away, we may expect a happy reunion in the green fields, by the rivers of light, in the Heavenly Eden. And when death with skeleton hand has snatched the flower that grew in our breast, do we not think of a fairer land, where the lost are found and the weary rest?

"Oh the hope of the unknown future springs
In its purest strength o'er the coffin and shroud,
The shadow is dense, but Faith's spirit-voice sings,
The sun is shining behind the cloud."

The misfortunes which now trouble us are only temporary. They will be borne away, and buried in the past, while we, if true to ourselves, to humanity, and to God, (and true we ever should be,) we shall be plumed with the soft pinions of heavenly love, and sweeping the azure heavens far beyond the clouds of time, we will bathe our happy souls in the blaze of that eternal glory, which bursts from the great white throne of Jehovah. In that sunlit clime, the shadows of earth shall nevermore fall upon our hearts, tears of sorrow nevermore dim our eyes; but standing on the crystal sea of light and joy, amid the glories of an eternal world, we shall lift our voice in swelling the glorious anthem with which angelic voices fill the corridors of heaven.

THE LORD'S DAY MORNING.

THIS September morning is most pleasant. Daylight spreads cool and broad over earth. The stars are fading—except the morning star, that still moves on, sparkling with light. The upper clouds are faintly touched with gold, and the leaves rustle in the fresh breeze. A holy calm pervades the scene, and the mind goes back nearly two thousand years, to a morning, when it began to dawn towards the first day of the week and Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were early abroad, to see a sepulchre in which a crucified man had been laid, and also to embalm his body with spices and wrap it in fine linen. Before they reached the tomb, to their great astonishment and alarm, the solid earth began to tremble from its foundations. A glorious being, with countenance like lightning, and raiment white as snow, was seen descending from heaven. His attention was also directed to the sepulchre. He rolled away the stone laid at its mouth, and sat upon it. His majestic appearance could not but fill all beholders with awe, so that the bold, rough soldiers were helpless as babes —became as dead men.

When the women approached with the spices, to accomplish their purpose, the body was not to be found. The angel tried to calm their fears by telling them "He knew whom they sought—that the crucified Savior had risen. He was not there."

He spoke gently, but his heavenly grandeur so astonished them, they went out quickly and fled from the sepulchre—trembling and amazed. As they went to tell the disciples what they had seen, Jesus stood by them with the salutation, "All Hail." They were so full of joy, they held him by his feet. No doubt, they feared he would escape from them, and they determined to hold him while they expressed their devotion and gratitude. Their effort to keep him with them was very touching. They had seen him laid in the sepulchre, and supposed they would have the mournful pleasure of wrapping him in spices and fine linen, but when they went to the grave, he was nowhere to be seen. In much distress, Mary stood weeping, and looking into it, she saw two angels, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had laid.

When he eame so unexpectedly before them, they held him by his feet while they worshipped him. Their grateful affection was no doubt very pleasant to him. He had endured terrible agony for their sake—for the sake of all the frail children of earth. For it, they clung to him with the tenderest love, and he did not object to their expression of it. He looked upon those who loved him as his brothers, sisters and mother.

This same day two of his disciples took a walk into the country. Jesus appeared to them, and so explained the scriptures that referred to the Messiah expected by the Jews, that "their hearts burned within them." He was known to them in the breaking of bread, and then vanished from their sight. They at once rose up and returned to the city, and found all the disciples assembled, saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon." All except one believed he had risen. To convince him, Jesus told him to put his finger into his pierced hands and side. "My Lord and my God," burst from his very heart.

He remained with his disciples forty days, and after giving the great commission for the benefit of the world, he ascended to his Father on the first day of the week. On the next occurrence of the day the disciples were assembled, and a sound from heaven, as of a rushing, mighty wind, filled the house. Cloven tongues of fire sat upon each. All were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in sixteen or seventeen languages, as utterance was given. Thus they were enabled to tell the wondrous story of the cross to the nations of the earth.

A day hallowed by so many memories should be truly sacred to the followers of Christ. The first thought should be of the "Lord who has risen indeed," and should we not devote all of its honrs to his service? C. F.